



Yachats Weed of the Month – June 2023

Scotch Broom (*Cytisus scoparius*)

In May and June you can't miss all the bright yellow flowers on shrubs along Highway 101 and many other roads in our area. That is Scotch broom. There is plenty of it in Newport, Waldport and Florence, but it's hard to find when you drive through Yachats. That's because your friendly local Trails Crew has made a point of removing it all along the Highway 101 corridor through our town. You can also help by pulling this weed now, while the soil is still moist and before the seeds set.

Identification: The shrubs grow up to 10 ft (3 m) tall, with small green leaves. Flowers are usually bright yellow but may have varying amounts of red or brown tones. Stands of broom are unmistakable when in flower. The mature seed pods are dark brown and shaped like pea pods. Broom plants produce large quantities of seed which can remain viable for up to 80 years. French broom, Spanish broom and Portuguese broom are broadly similar in appearance, having small leaves and bright yellow flowers, and all of them are undesirable.



Impact: Scotch broom is a problem throughout Oregon. It invades various habitats, especially disturbed areas such as cleared plots and roadsides. Brooms displace native plants and inhibit reforestation. The seeds and flowers are toxic to humans and livestock. In summer, broom represents a severe fire hazard.

Management: Oregon State University has various documents available online with recommendations for controlling Scotch broom. It used to be that all broom plants should be pulled or dug out. Now, the recommendation is to cut the stems on broom plants that are more than 1/2" in diameter. Plants smaller than this should be pulled out by hand or with a tool such as a weed wrench. Try to minimize soil disturbance when dealing with broom, otherwise you may encourage dormant broom seeds to germinate. The best time to deal with broom is in the spring, when the soil is still moist and seed pods haven't yet set.

The Weed of the Month is brought to you by the Yachats Trails Crew. Visit our website www.yachatstrails.org